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A PROCESS FOR THE IN SITU EXTRACTION OF OIL FROM SHALE BEDS AND SIMILAR FORMATIONS

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The present invention refers to a way of extracting oil from shale rock and similar beds in situ by means of channels which cut through the shale strata, are supplied with heat for the heating of the shale bed, and which are separated from the outlet boreholes formed in the shale by means of shale rock sections in between. The object of the invention is to achieve an improvement of this established procedure, in particular with regard to the quality and composition of the extracted products, which is essentially obtained by embedding heating elements which are preferably heated electrically, in heating boreholes, and which have smaller cross sections than the cross sections of the boreholes and by introducing into the interspace between the channel wall and the heating element thus obtained a filling that transfers heat from the heating element and the shale and simultaneously counteracts or prevents, respectively, a flow of the oil products gasified from the shale in the direction towards and along the heating element.

The invention will be more thoroughly described below with reference to the modes of implementation as shown in examples illustrated in the enclosed figure, and other accompanying characteristics of the invention which will also be discussed.

Figure 1 illustrates a section through a part of shale bed, in which the arrangement of a heating element installed according to the invention for the accomplishment of the process is shown. A vertical section through a rock formation according to a modified design is shown in Figure 2, and a flat view of this latter design is in Figure 3.

In a shale bed, 2, vertical channels, 4 in Figure 1 and 9 in Figures 2 and 3, are drilled, in which heating elements are embedded. These can consist of coiled pipe 44 according to Figure 1, equipped with inlet 32 and outlet 36 for a hot medium, gas or steam, which then remains separated from the surroundings during its bassage through the coiled pipe 44. The pipe 44 can in addition be designed as an electrical resistor and function both for the fluid conduction of the medium mentioned and for the development of heat accompanying an electric current. With the design according to Figure 2 an electric heating element 17 is used. After the heating element has been inserted the channels are filled with backing sand a maleable substance, respectively, such as cement, clay or other suitable filler. The channels can be closed at the upper ends by collars 21, 28 which must necessarily be cemented into the rock foundation. On top of the shale bed 2 there is often an overlying stratum of lime 47 (Figure 2) with a thickness of several meters. Then the electrical resistance is only active within that portion of hole 9, which is surrounded by the oil-bearing shale. In other words, the electric current at the level of the lime layer is conducted through low resistance wires and therefore thermoelectric heat is not developed here to an appreciable extent.

Besides the channels mentioned above, exhaust holes  $\underline{8}$  according to Figures 2 and 3 are made in the shale bed, through which the

products formed during the dry distillation [carbonization] are evacuated, and which consequently do not contain any heating element. These exhaust holes  $\underline{8}$ , which are sealed from the limestone at the top by collar  $\underline{27}$ , are connected through ducts  $\underline{52}$  to a condenser which is best cooled by either air or cooling water.

At the surface expanse of the shale bed, channels 9 and 8, respectively, are arranged in such a way, as exemplified in Figure 3, that a heat-supplying channel 9 is surrounded by a number of exhaust holes 8. It is particularly advantageous to carry out the heating of the shale bed so that a wave of heat is transmitted horizontally through the shale bed, for example in the direction from the line of holes 40 in Figure 3 towards the line of holes 41 through a successive connection of the heating elements. "When this heat wave in part of the shale bed reaches a temperature of about 300°C, or prior to this, the shale begins to release combustible gases which in part are condensable and in part not condensable and which are conveyed to a condenser, common to a plurality of channels 8 which separates the former from the latter." The incondensable cases can be used, for example, for the preneating and heating, respectively, of a new zone of the shale bed with an arrangement as depicted in Figure 1. The duration of the degasification periods may be adjusted to the desired degree, by such variables as the distance between the holes, which can be, for example, 1/2 to 2 meters. The maximum temperature of the mentioned heat wave can amount to approximately 500°.

The hydrocarbons formed during the distillation process in the shale rock include condensable products from the lighest petroleum [gasoline] to the heaviest oil. Because the heating channels according to the invention are filled, the result is that the hydrocarbons are driven in the direction of the outlet channels 8, and thus away from the hot heating elements. Otherwise, of course, the hydrocarbons would find their way to these elements to a large extent, especially in the lower part of the shale layer because of the high rock pressure prevailing there. The extraordinary

advantage is thus gained that an unwanted cracking of the oil products is essentially avoided. The heating method according to the invention therefore allows recovery of a considerably greater percentage of high-grade gasoline products than with presently familiar methods.

While a shale bed section is being supplied with heat, an expansion of the shale sets in, at least in the beginning, in the longitudinal direction of the heat supply channels, and thus in such a direction as to cross the shale layers. If a number of such channels are simultaneously heated then these create within the shale mass static pillars of heat with a greater height than that of the colder shale mass located in between them. This shale mass therefore becomes affected by forces directed in a vertical direction, the effect of which is to separate the different strata of shale from one another, so that the combined vertical displacement of these plus the gaps formed between the strata of shale approach a configuration that corresponds to the shale layer at its highest temperature around the heated channels. In a cross section the shale layer assumes the appearance shown schematically in Figure 2. On the other hand the shale layer within zones 54 limited by the dotted lines 53 in Figure 3 of the shale mass shows a falling temperature from the holes  $\underline{9}$  to the holes  $\underline{8}$ , and within the resulting temperature differences the degasification can be considered to continue at different temperatures, for example from 300° to 500°. A certain molecule which is released from the shale mass at point 39 during the dry distillation process will on its way from this point to the outlet hole 8 pass through temperature zones of lower temperatures than that existing at point 39.

The pipe system shown in Figure 1 can be used for different heating purposes by allowing the existing channel in a previously degassed hot zone of the shale bed to conduct a fluid stream by means of pipes laid on the ground. Air, water, steam or other fluids which are heated in the process may then be led to a channel in a shale bed zone where the oil extraction is to be started or is already in progress.

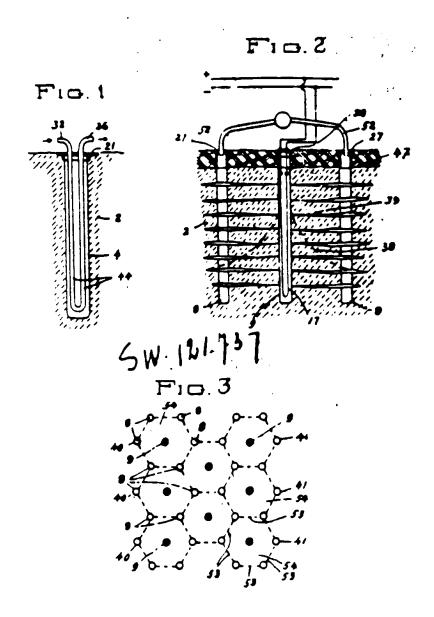
After the rock mass has been degassed, it wholly or partially consists of what is called shale coke, which indicates that after the gases are driven off, combustible carbon remains in the shale. According to the invention the rock mass can be ignited before or after cooling and the residual shale coke can be oxidized to shale ashes by introducing combustion air to the existing channel system. A very slow combustion that persists for several years can in this manner remain in progress, and the heat thereby generated can be utilized for various purposes, such as the heating of shale rock and hot water for homes, steam production, cultivation of plants, etc. According to the invention the cultivation of plants can also be carried out directly on the shale rock and in this way utilize the heat stored in the rock for a great many years.

### Patent claims:

- 1. A process for in situ recovery of oil from shale beds and similar rock layers by means of channels that penetrate the shale strata, and are supplied with heat for the heating of the shale mass and which are separated from the exhaust holes formed in the shale by means of shale bed sections in between, characterized by heating elements being embedded in the heating channels, which are preferably heated electrically, and which have smaller cross sections than the cross sections of these channels, such that the interspace thus obtained between the channel wall and the heating element may be provided with backing sand that transfers heat from the heating element to the shale and simultaneously counteracts or prevents, respectively, the flow of oil products gasified from the shale in the direction towards and along the heating elements.
- 2. A process according to claim 1, characterized by the interspace being filled with a cast compound.
- 3. A process according to claims 1 or 2, characterized by the fact that a heating element in the form of a pipeline is brought

down into the heating channels, and the inner part of the pipeline, through which is led a hot medium, is entirely separated from the channel and that the heat supply to the pipeline is also produced electrically.

- 4. A process according to one of the previous claims, characterized by the fact that the channel system made in the shale bed is utilized for regenerative heating of the rock mass in which channels in a previously degassed hot zone of the shale bed are connected with pipelines over the ground and are allowed to conduct a medium which is heated in this zone, and also characterized by the fact that channels in an untreated zone of the shale rock are directly or indirectly supplied with energy utilized in this manner from the previously mentioned zone.
- 5. A process according to one of the previous claims, characterized by the shale coke remaining in the shale rock after the degasification is combusted to produce shale ashes by introducing air into the available system of channels.



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## PATENT Nº 121737 SVERIGE

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## SVENSKA SKIFFEROLJE AKTIEBOLAGET, OLILBRO

# Sätt att utvinna olja ur skifferberg och dylikt in situ.

Uppfinnares E. I jungation

Foreliggande uppfinning hanfor sig till ett satt att utvinna olja ur skifterbeig och dylikt in situ medelst skifferlagren skarande kanaler, vilka tillföras varme för uppvårmning av skiffermassan och vilka aro skilda från i skiftern utformade avloppskamaler medelst mellanligg inde partier av Skifterberget Uppefinnangen erser att åstadkomma en förhattring av denna kanda metod speciellt i avseende på de utvunna produkternas beskaftenhet och sammansattning, vilket vasentligen ernås darigenom, att i uppvarminneskanalerna nedforas varmerlement, vilka foretradesvis appearmak på elektrisk vag, och vilka hava mindre tvårsektionsarea an dessa kanalers tvarsektionsarea och att i det så erhållira mellancummet meilan kanalväggen och varmeelementet anbringas en fyllmassa, som förmedlar varmeovergang mellan varmeelementet och skiffern och samtidigt metverkar resp. forhindrar en stromning av de ur skiffern forgasade ofjeprodukterna i riktning mot och fangs utined varingelementet.

Uppfinningen skall nedan narmare beskrivas under hanvisning till å bifogade rilning som exempel visade utföringsformer av densamma, varvid även andra uppfinningen kannetecknande egenskaper skola angivas.

I fig. I visas en sektion genom ett parti av ett skitterberg, i vilket är anbragt ett för sattets genomforande enligt uppfinningen anordnat varmeelement. I fig. 2 visas en Kertikalsektion genom ett bergparti enligt en moditterad utforingsform och fig. 3 en planvy av denna senare utforingsform.

Lett skitferberg 2 åro nedborråde vertikala kanaler, i fig. Lebetecknade med 1 och i fig. 2 och 3 med 9, i vilka varmeelement anbringas Dessa kunna utgoras av en rorslinga 11 enligt fig. 1, försødd med inlag 32 och avlopp 36 for ett hett medium, gas eller ånga, som darvid under sin "passage genom rörslingan 44 år skalt från omgivningen. Boret 44 kim darjamte vara utformat som elektriskt motstånd och fungera såval för genomströminig av del namnda mediet som för överbringande av värme genom elektrisk ström. Vid utföringsförmen enligt fig. 2 användes ett elektriskt

varmeelement 17. Sedan varmeelement t nedforts, uttyllas kanalerna med en massa respgjulmassa, sasom cement, iera eller divit t
kanalerna kunna upptift vara 10 sturar i v
lock 21, 28, som lampligen cementeras raste t
berggrunden. Ovanpa slatterberget 2 a det
overlagral ett kulldager 47, 11g, 2 a det of
maktighet av många meter, varsta det st
triska motstandet endast at verksatat mote
den del av halen 9, som at autiven av de
offetorande skittern. Den elektroger skade
men tillfores alltsa motstandet general de
mingar som miva med kalkdager av de
ledare och darfor har icke a giv i a a neg
minimivard utstrackning

Formfour de ovannamindark material upplastas kamaler 8 enligt 1/2 2 och 3 i sontarberget, genom vilka de vid formfestillati acidistrade produkterial eviens och vilka dily arke intvinnaminagon uppvarante zenom ung Dessa kamaler 8, som upplær och typestillation av lock 27 dargetion enligt 2 och forbindelse med en kondersog, oli in angebigen kan vara futtkyld et er arkse synd golkyivatten.

Lyturstrackmingen av det skill biologis som skull avverkas, anbringas kanaler ir i sa. 8 t ex pa saft som framgar ev og at dar en varmelilliorselkanat a onigives over the avloppskanale. 8. Det år sårskitt fordendrigt att genomfora skillerbergets uppvariming se att en vag av varme horrsontelit for place, o genom skillerbeiget. Ues arriklning från hars iden 40 i fra 3 mot habraden 41 genom su. 5 cessiv inkoppling in variateelementen Naidenna varmevåg i ett parti av skitterberget natt en temperatur av omkring 300° eiler tier gare, borjar skillern avgiva branubara gaser, som dels aro kondenserbara dels okondenserbara och som infedas i en för ett tlestar somaler 8 gemensam kondensor, som avskiljer de form fram de senare. De okonden serbara gos er na kunna ti ex anxandas for for- resp. uppvarnining av en ny zoo, av skillecho get ved uttoringsformen enlegt fig. 1. Avgasnings periodens fidslangd varietas i onskad grad, ht at sammanhangande med det melkan haten valida avstandet som t ex kan vara ( a 2



meter. Den namuda varmevageres maximistemperatur kan uppga till omkring 500

De vid destillationsprocessen i skitterberget bildade kolvatena omfalta kondenserbara: produkter fran den fattaste bensmen till den tyngsta oljan. Genom att uppvaranningskanalerna nu enligt upplinningen ato igentylldaernas, alt kolvalena foras i riktning mot avloppskanalerna 8, d. v. s. bort tran de heta uppynrimningselementen. Eljest skulle namligen kolyatena i stor utstrackning soka sin vag till dessa element, speciellt i den nedredelen av skifterlagret till foljd av det dar rådande hoga bergtiyeket. Man vinner sålunda den utomordentliga fordelen, att en icke onskvard spallning eller krackning av obje produkterná vasentligen undvikes. Uppvariuningsmetoden enligt uppfinningen medgivet dartor en utymning av procentuellt vascuth<sub>s</sub>) meern hogyardiga bensinprodukter an vid hitally bands meloder

Under varieschillorsein till ett skitterbergparticipationer arministene till att borga med en utsidgning av skuttern i varmetilltorselkaadernas langdriktning, vilken korsar skillerlagren. Om 🌬 mital dylika kanaler samodigt birya torencal for uppyarmning, bilda dessa from skillermassan slaende vermepelare medstorre hondmati an den mellan desamina belagun kaffare skutermassan. Denna skillermassa blir dans i paverkad av i verbikalidde, ningen gaende krafter, som strava att skilj+ de olika skilferlagi u från varandra, så all dessas sammanlagda vertikala malt pius melfan skatfeeragien uppkomina spatterna naimar sig det, som molsvarar skutterlagret vid dess hogsta temperatur kring de uppvarinda kanaleena Skitterlagret far i sektion ett utseemle, som schematiskt visas i fig. 2. A undra sidan uppvisar skifferlagret mom de med streekadi barjerna 53 begransade zonerna 54 i 115 3 av skaltermassan en fallande temperatur fede halen 9 till balen 8 och kan mom de darvid forekommande temperalinidifterenserna av astaugen tankas fortga vid olika temperaturer f. ex. fran 300. fill 500. En ves molekyt som vid punkten 39 under forr desullationsprocessen frigores ur skittermassan, koamest på sin vag trån denna punkt till averpshale) 8 att passera temperaturzoner. som alla uppvisa lagie temperatur an den. som existerar vid punkten 39.

Det i fig. I visade ledningssystemet kan användas för olika uppvarnningsåndamal, genom att en i en redan avgasad het zon av skifterheiget helintlig kanal bringas genom över jord lagda ledningar att genomstronimas av ett fluidum, t. ex. lutt, vatten eller anga, som harunder uppvarmes och sedan t. ex. ledes till en kanal i en skifferbergzon, där öljentvinning skall miedas resp. pågår.

Seilan bergmassin oxgasats, består den helt eller detxis in s. k. skifterkoks, d. v. s. guserma are avilavna, men brannhært koll finnes annu kvo i skutern Enligt upptimingen kan bergmassan tore eller etter avsvaming anstandas och skutterkoksen i densamma fors i hrännas till skutteraska, genom antarande av torbranningslutt i det foretintliga Lamaisvistemet fin mycket langsam, under manga ar pagaende forbranning kan på detta satt fortgå och det darvid bildade varmet utivittjas for olika and mål, såsom uppvaranning ev skutterberg, varmevalten till bostader, angalstring, vavtodling erd Vaxtodling kan aven enligt upptimningen med fördel anbringas derekt på skutterberget, som på så satt under en lång toljd av år kan tillgodogora sig det i berget magasmerade varmet.

#### Patentanspråk

I Saft att atvinua olja ur stateske a och dylikt mesan medelst skifterfager skorande kanner, vilka tilltoras variue tor appyante ming av statternerssan och vilka a – skilds frag enganger av statter

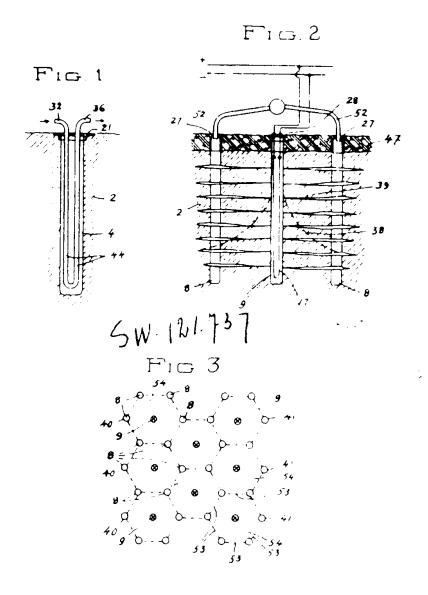
delst meitannizande partier av skilterberg is kannerecknat darav, all i uppvaomiergste nalerna nedt ras varme lenerid, adies forestradesvis uppvaomies på elektrist, være och vitka hav e i metre tvarsektione av e i av tesseknaders tværetels under varsektione av e i av tesseknaders tværetels under aneren er en visse kanalers tværetels under aneren er en visse skiller i med væretels av tværetels andren, is er evillerisse som formedler væretelskilleri och særetelskilleri och særetelskilleri och særetelskilleri och særetelskilleri och skilleri och særetelskilleri och særetelskilleri och særetelskilleri och særetelskilleri och særetelskilleri och skilleri och særetelskilleri och særetelskilleri och skilleri och særetelskilleri och særetelskil

2. Salt enligt patent inspraiset in his community datase at a mellanoumnist dyalor consequent that (villages)

3. Satt enber pedentanspraker bei e. 2. Karenetecknat dariv att man å uppværatur kanalerna nedrea værmeelement i totar even forfedning. Værs mer at helt av dedt e att malen och geneau vilken tedes ett be e et dram, værpande værmetillferset het e ded mingen aven der på elektrisk vær.

I Satt enligt nagat av de frægar indene tentanspraken, kommtecknid afsæker, i er skillerberget uppnagna hamalsvef met er myllpas for regererativ uppvarinning av ber massam genom att kanadet i en resten av sad hel zon av skilterberget forbuides sæktenberget forbuides sæktenmassav ett medium, som impværmes av denna zon och att kanader i en abehavistat zon av skilterberget duckt eller nebrekt fistoras in den forstnamnda zonen på detta satt tillvarintagen energt.

5 Satt enligt nagot av de forgades to fortentansprakere konnietecknat darev odt e skitterberget etter avgasningen konstantibe skitterkoks forbrannes tilt skitter iska gen m interande av fott i det förhanden man felk i nalsysteme!



Swedish specification 121 737

Translation; page 1, second column, 3rd paragrap:
lines 10-17.

"When this neat wave in part of the shale rock reaches a temperature of about 500°C, or prior to this, the shale rockets to like off compustible gases which in part are condensable and in part not condensable and which are conveyed to a consensor common to a plue rality of channels which condenser separates the former from the latter."